

ADVENTURES
OF A
PINCUSHION.

VOL. I.

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The Olive Percival
Collection of
Children's Books





Extract from
an ^{THE} *original*
ADVENTURES *of*

OF A

PINCUSHION:

DESIGNED CHIEFLY

FOR THE USE OF

YOUNG LADIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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Imagination here supplies  
What Nature's sparing hand denies;  
And by her magic powers dispense,  
To meanest objects, thought and sense.

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1815.

PART 18

JOHN RYAN

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## P R E F A C E.

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**T**HE Author of the following sheets is well aware of the objections which may be made to the performance; but hopes the candour of the public will excuse those defects, which the nature of the undertaking rendered it almost impossible to avoid. The pointed satire of ridicule, which would perhaps have given a zest to those scenes in which the subject of these pages was engaged, was not, in the opinion of the writer, at all proper for those readers for whom it was solely designed: to exhibit their superiors in a ridiculous view, is not the proper method to engage the youthful mind to respect:

to represent their equals as the objects of contemptuous mirth, is by no means favourable to the interests of good-nature: and to treat the characters of their inferiors with levity, the author thought was inconsistent with the sacred rights of humanity. Circumscribed, therefore, to the narrow boundaries of simple narrative, it has been the design of the following pages carefully to avoid exciting any wrong impression, and, by sometimes blending instruction and amusement, to make it more easily retained.

To multiply incidents in these circumstances was a very difficult task, especially as it was wished to make them rise naturally from the subject; and not obtrude unnecessarily without any seeming cause to produce them. The avidity with which children peruse books of entertainment, is a proof how much publications proper for their attention are required. Though the sentiments should

be suited to their simplicity, they ought to be expressed with propriety; since a taste for elegance may be insensibly acquired; and we should always endeavour to present them with proper models of imitation. Conscious of the difficulty of the undertaking, the Author of these adventures would gladly have declined the task, in the expectation of such a work engaging the attention of those whose genius were more equal to its accomplishment. With the hope, therefore, of inspiring others to excel the example, it is now submitted to the world "with all its imperfections on its head," trusting for a candid reception to the motive which first suggested the idea: That of presenting the juvenile reader with a few pages which should be innocent of corrupting, if they did not amuse.



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THE  
ADVENTURES  
OF A  
PINCUSHION.

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**I**T happened one very fine afternoon in the latter end of May, that Mrs. Airy had been collecting together a great number of different pieces of silk, in order to make a work-bag; which she intended as a present to one of her nieces. Miss Martha Airy, her eldest daughter, was about ten years old, and had been for some time indolently lolling with both her elbows on the table, looking at her mamma while she was choosing the prettiest pattern for the purpose I just mentioned. Her chin rested on her two hands, which were crossed over each

other, and she was seated on the back of her brother's chair, which he had turned down in that manner for the purpose of serving him as a horse. At last, however, her weight proving too great for the seat she had chosen, as she did not keep still, the upper part of the chair-back came to the ground, while the other end mounted up like a piece of board for a see-saw; and in her fall tumbling down backwards, proved the occasion of a great deal of mischief, by over setting a curious set of tea-china, which her sister Charlotte was playing with; and which she had received as a present the day before from her grand-papa. Charlotte was so enraged at the loss of her play-things, that, without offering to help her sister, she gave her a slap on the face, and told her, she was very naughty to spoil things in such a manner by her carelessness; and that she would break her plates whenever they came in her way. She was proceeding in this manner, when Mrs. Airy thought it time to interfere, and was extremely angry with Charlotte for her warmth. "Martha was not to blame," added she, "as she had no

intention of doing the least mischief to your cups and saucers. I think, as I told her once before, she was not sitting in a graceful attitude, and had she moved at the time I spoke to her, it would have prevented her fall; but that is no justification of your behaviour to your sister. She has not deserved your reproaches, and I did not think you could have behaved so improperly, as well as unkindly, as to strike any one, especially your elder sister. Indeed, I am much displeased with you; and the threat you made of breaking her plates in return, is so very naughty and wicked, that I think you deserve to be punished; and I desire you will ask Martha's pardon for the blow you have given her." Charlotte coloured with indignation and anger, at the thoughts of submitting in such a manner to humble herself. She had heard some silly girls declare, they would never own their being in the wrong, and was withheld from acting in the noblest manner, by the false shame of confessing an error. At length, however, upon her mamma coming towards her with an avowed intention of inflicting some further punish-

ment, she mumbled out, in a low voice, which was very difficult to be understood, "That she was sorry that she had struck her sister." Martha, who was extremely generous, and uncommonly good-natured, very affectionately kissed her sister, and told her she was much concerned at the mischief she had occasioned; though she could not have helped it, as she fell down before she was aware of it, and did not see that her tea-things were near her. Charlotte grew reconciled by degrees; but it was a long time before she regained her usual cheerfulness. After some time, however, the sisters seated themselves in a window by



the table, and solicited their mamma for a bit of silk to make a Pincushion. Mrs. Airy gave them several pieces to choose which they liked best; and after they had taken them up a dozen times, or perhaps as many more, had they been reckoned, Martha made choice of a square piece of pink satin, which she neatly sewed and stuffed with bran, and which, gentle reader, when it was finished, was the identical Pincushion whose adventures form the subject of this little volume. Assuming, therefore, the title of an Historian, or Biographer, which is generally understood to mean a person who is writing an account of his own, or another's actions, I shall take the liberty to speak for myself, and tell you what I saw and heard in the character of a Pincushion. Perhaps you never thought that such things as are inanimate could be sensible of any thing which happens, as they can neither hear, see, nor understand; and as I would not willingly mislead your judgment, I would, previous to your reading this work, inform you, that it is to be understood as an imaginary tale; in the same manner as when you

are at play, you sometimes call yourselves gentlemen and ladies, though you know you are only little boys and girls. So, when you read of birds and beasts speaking and thinking, you know it is not so in reality, any more than your amusements, which you frequently call making believe. To use your own style, and adopt your own manner of speaking, therefore, you must imagine, that a Pin cushion is now *making believe* to address you, and to recite a number of little events, some of which really have happened, and others might do so with great probability: and if any of the characters here represented should appear to be disagreeable, the author hopes you will endeavour to avoid their failings, and to practise those virtues or accomplishments, which render the contrary examples more worthy of imitation. And now, if you please, we will return to the account of what further befel me in the family of Mrs. Airy.

After the young ladies had amused themselves a great while with the pieces of silk I have so often had occasion to mention, and Miss Martha had com-

pleted me to her entire satisfaction, she took all the pins out of an old green one, which was originally in the shape of a heart, but had, by losing a great part of its inside, through various little holes, quite lost its form: and which, that she might find those pins which had gone through the silk, she cut open on an old newspaper, and then stuck all she could find upon my sides in the shape of letters, which she afterwards changed to flowers, and a third time altered to stars and circles; which afforded her full amusement till bed-time. Miss Charlotte, though her mamma had given her as much silk as her sister, had only cut it into waste; while Martha, after she had furnished me, had saved the rest towards making a housewife for her doll. I could not help reflecting when I saw all Charlotte's little shreds and slips littering the room, what a simple method many little girls are apt to get into, of wasting every thing which their friends are so kind as to give them, and which properly employed, might make them many useful ornaments for their dolls, and sometimes pretty trifles for them-

selves. Charlotte Airy, as such children usually are, was desirous of having every thing she saw; so that her drawers were always filled with bits of ribbon, pieces of silk, cuttings of gauze, catgut, and muslin: and if she wanted to find her gloves, tippet, tuckers, or any part of her dress, she was obliged to search for them in twenty different places, and frequently to go without what she was looking for. Martha, on the contrary, by taking care of what might be of use, and laying it by in a proper place, always knew where to find what she had occasion for directly. So that it frequently happened that she went out with her mamma, when her sister was forced to stay at home; because she had lost something which had delayed her so long to look for, that she could not get ready in time. This very circumstance happened the day after I became acquainted with her, to her no small mortification. Mrs. Airy was going to see the exhibition of pictures at the Royal Academy, and told her daughters, if they behaved well they should accompany her; as Mrs. Gardner and her niece Miss Lounge would call at

one o'clock. After breakfast, Charlotte, who had found the mould of an old button in one of her papa's waistcoat pockets, which she had been rummaging, had cut to pieces an axle-tree of a little cart, which belonged to her brother, to make a spindle, in order to convert it into a tee-



totum; with which she was so much entertained, that she was very unwilling to leave it to go to work, though her mamma repeatedly told her she would not be ready against Mr. Gardner's coach came. "Yes, I shall, madam!" said she, and played on. "Do pray go to work, Charlotte!" "Presently, madam." But still

she thought she would give it another twirl. "You shall not go if you have not finished your morning business!" "In a minute I will!" And so she simply idled away her time, without heeding her mamma's admonition, till near an hour beyond her usual time of beginning. This put her into such a hurry to finish when she found it was so late, that she stitched some wristbands she was about, and which were intended for her grand-papa, so very badly, they were obliged to be undone; which made her so cross, that in pulling out the work, she broke the threads of the cloth, and entirely spoiled it. Charlotte was a very fair-complexioned pretty girl; but you cannot imagine how ugly her ill-humour made her appear; nor how much more agreeable her sister looked, who was much browner, was pitted with the small-pox, and a much plainer child. I surveyed them both as I lay on the table, where my mistress had placed me to stick her pins as she took them out of the shirt collar which she was putting on; Martha looked so placid and cheerful, and seemed to speak so kindly when she asked a ques-

tion, that it made her really charming; while Charlotte, who had a very pretty mouth, and very regular features, stuck out her lips in a manner so unbecoming, and tossed about her head with such very illiberal jerks, that she lost all natural advantages in her wilful ill-humour.

A person happening to call on Mrs. Airy, to speak about some particular business, she left the children to attend him; and Martha, who pitied her sister's distress, and saw the impossibility of her finishing the task she was ordered to do, very kindly offered to assist her, without which she never could have accomplished it. But their mamma, at her return, immediately suspected the case to be as I have told you, and inquired what help Charlotte had received in her absence? They were both girls of too much honour to deny the truth, and in consequence of her frankly owning her sister's kindness, Mrs. Airy permitted her to retire, in order to prepare for the intended expedition; but, alas! poor Charlotte, who indeed was not always so good as she ought to have been, was not to go that morning, although her mamma had consented to it.

Betty, who came to put on her frock, was not very fond of her, for she was sometimes apt, when her mamma was not in the way, to speak very haughtily, and in a manner quite unbecoming a young lady. Unfortunately she forgot herself on the present occasion, and very rudely said, "You must come and dress me, and you must make haste, or I shall not be ready." Must I? replied Betty; That is if I please, Miss Charlotte, though you forgot to put that in: and unless you speak in a prettier way, I will not help you at all. "Then you may let it alone, for I will not ask you any otherwise," and away she went, banging the door after her, to call her sister, who was ready and waiting for the coach in her mamma's room. Martha ran directly, and began to pin her frock as she desired. But a new distress arose, for as she was too careless ever to retain any of my fellow-servants (commonly called a Pin-cushion) in her service, so she had not one pin to proceed with after three, which had stuck at one end of me, had been employed. Neither of them chose to apply to Betty, because they were sure

from Charlotte's ill-behaviour to be denied: and she would not permit her sister to ask her mamma, for fear of an inquiry which might not turn out to her credit. So, in short, they both traversed the room backwards and forwards, and were quite over-joyed when they found two (one of which proved to be crooked) between the joining of the floor. Then they each returned and took me up repeatedly, and examined me over and over, though they were convinced I had



been empty long ago. At last a loud rap at the door announced Mrs. Gardner's

arrival. The ladies were called, and Martha obeyed, though with reluctance to leave her sister: and Charlotte, with conscious shame and remorse for her past conduct, and heart-heaving sobs of disappointment, saw them drive away without her. I was left upon the table in the hurry of my mistress's departure: Charlotte took me up, and earnestly wished she had a Pincushion of her own; and so I should think would any one, who had experienced the want of such an useful companion; though, unless well furnished with pins, it is in itself but of little assistance, as she had but too unfortunately found. The slatternly appearance, and real inconvenience, which many ladies suffer from neglecting to provide themselves with, and retaining a few such necessary implements of female economy about them, is really inconceivable by any person accustomed to a proper degree of attention. Trifles are frequently regarded by the giddy and thoughtless as of no moment, when essentials are taken care of: but it is the repetition of trifles which constitutes the chief business of our existence. In other

words, people form their opinion of a young lady from her personal appearance; and if, because she is at work, and in want of pins, and destitute of a Pincushion, she has quite undressed herself, and her clothes are dropping off, she will be thought a negligent slattern; which, I suppose, is what no one would choose to be esteemed: so, when children accustom themselves to loll their elbows, stoop their heads, stand upon one foot, bite their nails, or any other ungraceful actions, it makes them disagreeable, and the object of dislike to all their friends, and every one who is acquainted with them. And it is very foolish to imagine, that because they are not in company with strangers it does not signify; for ill habits, when once they are acquired, are very difficult to leave off; and by being used to do an unpolite action frequently, they will do it without recollecting the impropriety; when, if they thought, perhaps, they would on no account have been guilty of it.

Miss Lounge, the young lady who accompanied Mrs. Airy to the exhibition, was a striking example of what I men-

tion above. She was about sixteen, and very tall of her age; so that she appeared quite womanly in person, though her manners were to the highest degree remarkable and unpleasing; she had a strange way of tossing her legs round at every step, as if she was making circles, and her arms were crossed over each other in so awkward a manner, and unfashionably low, that it made her still more ungraceful in her appearance: besides this, she had acquired a drawling tone in conversation, which made her completely an object of disgust; as it was entirely the consequence of her own neglect, and therefore was by no means deserving of that pity which is due to every natural defect or accidental deformity. She returned with her aunt to dinner.

Miss Charlotte was quite ashamed of entering the drawing-room, though she was now dressed, and had promised Mrs. Betty she would behave with more civility for the future. But the fear of mamma's exposing her folly to Mrs. Gardner, had made her dislike to show herself in company; and the conscious-

ness of having deserved reproof, made her justly apprehensive of receiving it. She did not venture down stairs, therefore, till dinner was on the table; and then, with her neck and face as red as blushes could make them, she paid her compliments to the company, without daring to look at her mamma. So cowardly and uncomfortable does the thought of a wrong action make those who have committed it, even when they are not certain it will be publicly known. And this reminds me of a few stanzas I found in Miss Martha's work-bag one day, when she put me into it with her scissars, (by mistake, I suppose) as my proper place was certainly in her pocket. But as they are so very a-propos to my present subject, I will present my readers with them: and as the author is quite unknown, if they should not be thought deserving of a favourable reception, they will not, at least, subject the writer to any mortification.

'Tis innocence only true courage can give,  
Or secure from the fear of disdain;  
To be conscious of guilt all affiance destroys,  
And the hope of enjoyment is vain.

If to error betray'd, then delay not to own  
The crime which has robb'd you of peace;  
As penitence only can wash out the stain,  
Or cause your vexation to cease.

When the ermine of conscience is spotted by guilt,  
Most severe are the pangs of the mind;  
'Tis a woe which no sympathy e'er can relieve,  
Nay, is hurt by a treatment too kind.

To feel undeserving of friendly esteem,  
Is the worst of all evils below;  
We may suffer from pain, but the sting of remorse  
Is the heaviest grief we can know.

Then careful your innocence ever maintain,  
Be assured it is worthy your care;  
Since no other distress so deprives us of hope,  
Or so soon sinks the soul in despair.

There was another short piece by the same hand, which my mistress had transcribed, to give her sister on occasion of a little quarrel which had happened between them: Miss Martha having mentioned to her the impropriety of speaking rudely to servants, and behaving in a different manner when her mamma was absent, to what she could dare to do in

her presence; which reproof Charlotte highly resented, and was very angry that her sister should find fault with her: as the following verses were applicable to the circumstance, she adopted them as her own on the occasion.

NAY, *Charlotte*, why so much displeas'd to be told,  
That your friends have discernment to see?  
If you could descend to *deserve* my reproach,  
The error lies sure not in *me*.

I mention'd the fault, that in future your care  
Might secure from unguarded surprise;  
I thought you had sense to rely on my love;  
To resent it I deem'd you too wise.

The freedom of friendship should never displease,  
Tho' harsh its reproofs may appear;  
Since often in public who flatter us most,  
Are the first at our weakness to sneer.

Then should you not gladly with candour receive  
The advice which affection bestows?  
For sincerity rarely we meet with in life,  
Few will aid us, but numbers oppose.

As to you, I am bound by the dearest of ties,  
My *sister*, as well as my *friend*;  
No undue command did I mean to usurp,  
Nor ever design to offend.

Then let us united in harmony live,  
For sisters should ne'er disagree ;  
And when I am wrong, equal freedom exert,  
To complain of these errors to me.

Mrs. Airy was so generous as not to expose her daughter's folly before Mrs. Gardner ; and as she had met with a severe punishment in consequence of her fault, and had promised amendment for the future, after a gentle réprimand, when she came down the next morning, nothing further passed on the subject.

Charlotte was so conscious of her late misbehaviour, that she had scarce courage to inquire what entertainment they had received from a sight of pictures at the Exhibition ; and Martha, who was extremely delicate and attentive, very cautiously avoided the subject, from fear of appearing to insult her sister, or to remind her mamma of the reason which had occasioned her absence from the party. Mrs. Airy inquiring whether Martha had not particularly taken notice of a large picture, which represented the death of Earl Goodwin ; she replied that Mrs. Gardner had pointed it out to her observation ; but that she had not re-

marked any particulars, except the figure of a king, and a large company at dinner. I will tell you the story then, my dear, to which this picture refers, said Mrs. Airy.



In the reign of Edward the Confessor, in the year 1042, Earl Goodwin, who had been accessory to the murder of Prince Alfred, was at dinner with the King at Windsor; and taking a piece of bread, called God to witness his innocence, and wished, if he uttered any but the truth, that the next mouthful he ate might choak him: which accord-

ingly happened, and the bread stuck in his throat, and he died immediately at the table. Do not you think, my dear, added Mrs. Airy, it was a just punishment for his untruth, and an awful judgment for calling God to witness a falsehood? "Indeed, Madam, I think it was quite dreadful; but are you sure that this account is true? for though it is certainly very wicked to tell a lie on any occasion, yet, as sometimes many people are thus guilty, I wonder that such events do not more frequently happen! You know that Miss Riby said she had not been writing last week, although you saw that her fingers were inked: and Charlotte had seen her doing it; why then did not the same accident happen to her?" "Because, my love, the punishment of such crimes does not always immediately follow the commission of them; but you may be sure that the remorse of conscience, and the secret uneasiness of mind which the guilty suffer, is a very great unhappiness; and the apprehension and the fear of a future account after death, besides the idea of present detection, is such a degree of

misery as no other punishment can equal. As to your question, whether I believe this account to be true? I certainly do. It was an extraordinary event which was recorded at the time it happened, and which every history has mentioned since, and faithfully transmitted to us. This is the best authority we can have for any fact which happened before our own time, and is therefore entitled to our belief. But why such examples are so rare, is not to be wondered at; because you know that wicked people will be punished hereafter; and though such instances sometimes happen, to teach others to be good, and to make them afraid of doing what might make them liable to such terrible vengeance, yet, in general, a crime of this kind does not meet with immediate chastisement; because, after death, as I have before told you, those who have been wicked, will suffer such misery as their sins deserved. Besides which, the liar is at present detested by every one, and loses all the advantage of confidence, and the pleasure of being believed: even when he does speak truth, he is liable to be suspected, and his word

is doubted on all occasions." The conversation was here interrupted by the arrival of two young ladies and their mamma, who came to pay a morning visit to Mrs. Airy. But as they did not say any thing worth the attention of my readers, I shall not trouble myself to repeat more of what passed than may be imagined, from the comments of my mistress and her sister, with which I shall present them.

Martha, before the room-door was well shut after them, began to observe that the eldest Miss Chantillon was very ugly, and very stupid; and the youngest a good pretty girl, and talked a great deal indeed. I wish, added she, I could speak as fast as she does. To talk so fast, my love, said her mamma, is by no means any accomplishment; and I am far from your opinion, in so highly admiring the merits of Miss Lucy. She chatters so fast, as frequently not to be understood; and has a very silly trick of beginning every sentence with a laugh, than which nothing can be more ill-bred. The person who is speaking, should never laugh, if she can help it, at her own wit, if she design to

excite mirth, or to meet with approbation from others. But without any such intention, Lucy assumes an affected giggle whenever she attempts to speak. She has likewise a very unbecoming pertness in her manner, and, by frequent interruptions, when her elders are otherwise engaged, renders herself extremely disagreeable. I would have you, my good girls, possess that desirable degree of proper courage, as never to feel ashamed of speaking when it is necessary; but I think it is an unpleasing sight to perceive a young woman, or child I should say, for Lucy is young enough for that epithet, affecting to understand every thing, and giving her opinion unasked, upon subjects which frequently expose her ignorance and presumption. This is aiming at a character to which she has no pretensions; and by wishing to rise into a woman, before she has reached the age of understanding, she is despised for her vanity, and loses that esteem she might have attained by a proper degree of humility, and her better knowledge of her station. This observation, my dear Martha, I would particu.

larly address to you; as you are generally thought uncommonly tall, and are usually imagined to be much older than you are. This I know you fancy to be a compliment which always appears to give you pleasure; but remember, that, if you assume airs of womanhood, and affect to be thought further advanced in age, you will have the less allowance made for any errors you may commit, and consequently meet with contempt where you might otherwise have escaped censure. Youth, and inexperience, are justly allowed to excuse any slight inadvertence in manners, or want of grace in appearance; but if you choose to be thought of more consequence, you must likewise expect, that the notice you may attract will not always be favourable to your vanity. I assure you, I think Miss Jenny Chantillon is much more agreeable than her sister, as she has courage sufficient to reply to any question, and to speak distinctly when she is particularly addressed, without inquiring, in Lucy's manner, into the reason of every word which is uttered, and deciding every argument according to her own fancy; and, I dare say, if you

will be careful to observe, you will find that Jenny always meets with attention from the company, while Lucy is frequently insulted, by being enjoined to silence, and by her hearers turning from her with disdain. In short, my dear, it requires a great deal of thought and propriety, to behave in an agreeable manner at your age. It is best not to be anxious to be taken notice of, since that eagerness always defeats its aim. Girls have not had the advantage of experience to teach them wisdom; and when once they are engaged in conversation, and find themselves attended to, their volatile spirits hurry them on, with the desire of obtaining applause for their wit, to say things which are sometimes neither delicate nor prudent; and which they may, when they have time to reflect, long have reason to repent having imprudently uttered. Any restraint at such a time, is, I know, always esteemed an ill-natured interruption, and is apt to damp their harmony, and lower their spirits. I would therefore warn you of the danger beforehand, that your own prudence may be a check to that unlimited indulgence,

which at such a period is liable to excess : and, I dare say, that your good sense will teach you, that my admonitions are always intended for your advantage. To impress this deeper upon your mind, I will repeat to you a few lines which were written to me, when I was young, by my aunt, and which, as they frequently occurred to my memory, I found to be singularly useful.

RECOLLECT, my sweet girl, ere you mix with the  
world,

There is need for some caution to guide ;  
Then wisely remember to govern your tongue,  
As silence much folly may hide.

Most useful, I think, you this maxim will find,  
And never its precepts neglect ;  
That who giddy and thoughtless will chatter away,  
Shall ne'er gain applause or respect.

Like the Parrot, awhile they may please and amuse ;  
But no real esteem will acquire ;  
And I trust that your wish when in converse you  
join,  
Is a nobler regard to inspire.

Remember that memory long may record  
The folly you utter'd in jest ;  
And a secret unmark'd, when escap'd from your lips,  
May long rob your bosom of rest.

Then conscious of error 'tis vain to repent,  
As the mischief admits no relief;  
And surely 'tis simple so thoughtless to lay  
The dismal foundation of grief.

The ladies now all retired to dinner: but I am ignorant of what passed there, as I was left upon a piece of embroidery, which my mistress was covering with some white paper to keep it clean: and she did not fetch me till after tea; when she carried me in her hand down stairs



with her work, to show some ladies who were assembled in the drawing-room. I then accompanied her into what was

usually called the Green Parlour, as the furniture was all of that colour; whither she went to play with her young visitors, whose names were Eliza Meekly and Julia Norris.

They amused themselves with playing on the harpsichord, while Miss Martha personated the music-master, and Charlotte chose to teach them dancing. Some part of the evening they played at going to the Exhibition; and just as they determined to visit the pictures, the footman came to acquaint the young ladies, that their coach was ready. Miss Meekly's bib was unpinned, and Martha gave me into her hand in a hurry while she was looking for her cloak. So without recollecting that I was another's property, Eliza put me into her pocket, made a very elegant curtsy, and stepped into the carriage. I felt really very sorry to part from a family with which I had been some time connected, and to one of whom I owed my being as a Pincushion. But my new mistress was so very engaging, that I was in hopes she would take care of me, and not leave me about to the mercy of a little kitten, who jumped into

her lap the moment she got home; and who afterwards frisked away with a little tassel which dropped off from one corner of a work-bag which lay on the table. But before I proceed with my history, it will be necessary to introduce my readers to Miss Meekly and her companions, and to make them better acquainted with this new family, who are all of them deserving their notice.

Mrs. Stanley, to whom the house belonged, was the widow of a clergyman, who had at his death left her in rather indigent circumstances; and she had been advised (to support herself and two younger sisters who lived with her) to take a small number of young ladies to board. Her number was confined to six; two of whom were those I have before mentioned. The others were three sisters, whose names were Saxby, and a Miss Una, who for her sweetness of temper, and excellence in every accomplishment, was esteemed superior to all the rest of her companions. Harriet Una was a cousin to Miss Meekly, and they usually slept together. She was just turned of thirteen, was tall and

large; had light brown hair, blue eyes, and a fine complexion: but her good-nature and willingness to oblige every one, made her the general favourite, and recommended her to universal esteem.

When the young ladies retired to bed, Eliza found me in her pocket, and told Harriet she was afraid Miss Airy would want her Pincushion; and she was the more concerned, as the family were to go into the country very early the next morning, and she should have no opportunity to return it. However, continued she, I will make a new one to present to Miss Airy when I see her; and I will keep this, as I have not one at present, my kitten having pulled mine to pieces this morning: but I will take care this shall not come to the same mischance. I was glad to hear that was her intention, as I should by no means have liked the thought of sharing the fate of my predecessor. At this time Mrs. Stanley entered the room to wish them a good night, and to see whether they were properly taken care of. I am very unhappy to-night, said Eliza, as soon as she was gone; and I feel ashamed of

receiving Mrs. Stanley's kisses, because I behaved in a manner I am sure she would not approve. What have you done, my dear cousin, replied Harriet, to make you so uneasy? I will tell you, answered Miss Meekly, though I do not like to confess my weakness. Just before dinner, Miss Charlotte Airy asked me to eat some preserved plums, which she said had been made a present of to her mamma, and which came from Portugal. They were very sweet and luscious; and as I am not allowed to have any thing of that kind, I refused her offer. But when we had dined, she pressed me again, and laughed at me very much for being so foolish, as to imagine any thing so innocent could hurt me; but supposed, as I went to school, my mistress (for so she sneeringly called Mrs. Stanley) would whip me if I did. At last, overcome with her persecutions, and vexed to be treated so much like a baby, and as if I was afraid of punishment, I took the plum, and have not been easy since. And now, my dear Harriet, what shall I do? Suppose Mrs. Stanley should ask me whether I have eaten any thing lately which I

ought not: and if she does not put that question, I feel so undeserving of her caresses, that she will see by my looks I have behaved improperly. I am very sorry, replied Miss Una; but as you are so sensible it was wrong, I may spare my recriminations. However, I think the noblest reparation you can now make, would be honestly to inform Mrs. Stanley of the crime, and the sincerity of your regret for having been guilty of it: should it be discovered by any other means, you will forfeit her esteem, and lose that confidence with which you are at present favoured; by such an unsolicited confession, you will restore satisfaction to your own conscience, and be certain of her approbation.

Eliza was convinced of the propriety and justice of her friend's advice, and promised to comply with it the next morning. But her excessive timidity prevented her making use of several opportunities which presented, though the subject occupied all her attention, and she could scarce think of any thing else. She again applied, therefore, to Harriet, and told her it was impossible for her to

summon up courage to do as she had desired; and begged she would, from her, acquaint Mrs. Stanley with what had happened. Miss Una, in the mildest terms, complied with her request; at the same time very generously commended her honour on every occasion, and urging her present uneasiness to engage Mrs. Stanley's compassion. Miss Meekly, when she was acquainted with her cousin's having revealed this secret, which had oppressed her mind, was very unwilling to attend her to the lady above mentioned. Mrs. Stanley received her with the greatest affection and tenderness; and after expressing in the warmest terms, her approbation of such a generous confession, added, You need never, my dear girl, be afraid either of anger or punishment, when with such a degree of frankness you acknowledge any fault you have committed. Be assured, your friends will be always willing to pardon those errors which you promise to amend: but let the present instance warn you, my Eliza, never to be led into actions which you know are improper, because the company you are with may ridicule your re-

fusal. Miss Charlotte Airy is, in my opinion, a very naughty girl, to endeavour to persuade you to do any thing which you have been forbidden. And I hope, from the remorse you have suffered, you will reflect on the folly of complying with any proposal which your conscience suggests to you is wrong. Do not be afraid of being laughed at for being good. Every person of real sense will esteem you for your resolution: and because a silly girl may sneer at your apprehension of punishment, it will be much more ridiculous, and wicked at the same time, to be guilty of what you are conscious is a crime, for which you will deserve, and perhaps receive, correction. Besides one bad action is but too often the cause of the commission of others; and when once we have deviated from what is right in a small instance, it is frequently the occasion of accumulated guilt. I will tell you an instance of this kind that may illustrate my meaning, and which, as I was acquainted with the person who is the subject of it, will, perhaps, make a deeper impression on your mind.

A young lady, whose real name I shall

(for the sake of charity) conceal under that of Lloyd, and who was, my dear Eliza, nearly of the same age with yourself, was educated with the utmost attention; and, as she was an only child, was the darling of her parents, and the centre of all their future expectations. Betsy, which was the usual appellation, went one day to visit a companion, with whom she was extremely intimate; but who, unfortunately for her, was not possessed of that strict honour which



should be the basis and foundation of friendship. When they had been for

some time at play in the garden, she proposed to go back to a little shop in the neighbourhood to make a purchase of some gingerbread; and though Miss Lloyd for a time objected to the proposal without leave, against her mamma's repeated command; yet, her companion, laughing at her squeamishness (as she wickedly called an adherence to her duty), prevailed over her better resolutions, and she accompanied her to the place I mentioned. As it was the only shop of the kind which the village afforded, the boys of an adjacent school very frequently went there for the same purpose as the two young ladies who now entered;—and two of the most unlucky of their number happened at that time to be bargaining for some balls. They staid very soberly till Miss Lloyd had taken out her purse to pay for the cakes she had purchased; but as the lock of her pocket-book was entangled in it, it came out of her pocket at the same time, when one of the boys snatched it from her hand, and rudely declared he would see its contents, and know all the girl's secrets. This vexed her extremely, and she thoughtlessly

pursued him, as he ran away with the prize, till she was a good way from home. He was joined by several of his school-fellows, who took part with him, and behaved in so wild a manner as to terrify her greatly. At length, however, she got away from them, and ran back with all the speed in her power: but as it was later than her usual time of returning, her parents were uneasy, and questioned her with great tenderness and anxiety, as to the reason of her stay. She told them, she had been out with Miss Hannah (the companion she had really visited) and her maid, and that a horse had been near running over her, which had frightened her so much, as to prevent her return.

This story was believed by Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd for some time; and Betsy, who had at first been very unhappy at the thoughts of such a wicked deceit, at length grew reconciled as she found herself undetected. She therefore ventured upon a second transgression, from the encouragement which she foolishly imagined the secrecy of her first fault had given her; and with her intimate Miss

Hannah, took another walk, without any person to have the care of them. But during their absence from home, an unexpected accident punished the imprudent Miss Lloyd for her disobedience and untruth, in a manner which will give her cause for repentance to the latest period of her life; for as she was crossing a road in her return, a horse, which had been tied to the rails of a house at a little distance, broke the bridle



which confined him, and galloped away full speed unrestrained by any opposition,

Ell in his passage the unfortunate Miss Lloyd, who did not perceive his approach, was thrown down, and broke her leg in such a terrible manner, as to occasion her being a cripple ever after. She has since confessed, the consciousness of her falsehood was such a conviction to her mind of the wickedness of her conduct (when she was made sensible that the accident was the consequence of her disobedience to her parents), that it was more difficult to support than any bodily uneasiness she had suffered; and the reflection that they would never be able to confide in her for the future, was the occasion of so much self-reproach, as to deprive her of every enjoyment. This instance may serve to convince you, that a slight error is very frequently, without any previous intention, and when least expected, the occasion of such crimes, as in the cooler moments of thought (that is, when you have time to reflect on the wickedness of the action) you would never be capable of committing; and as none can be sure they would be able to resist temptation, it is best never to do any thing which you know to be wrong,

though it may appear to be in the smallest instance, since the desire of concealing a trifling fault, may lead you to hide it by a falsehood, which is one of the greatest you can be guilty of.

Miss Meekly was convinced of the truth and propriety of this argument, and promised to be more attentive in her future conduct. She then joined her companions with that cheerful good humour, which distinguished her character, and attended them into the great parlour, where they usually spent the morning. When they had concluded their work, writing, &c. Mrs. Stanley always made them read to her, and encouraged them to ask any question which occurred to them; to make their own observations upon those passages in history which struck their imaginations; or to propose to her any objection which arose in their minds. She desired them to ask the meaning and origin of those customs they did not comprehend, and by so doing had frequent opportunities of improving their understandings. Instances of this kind very frequently occurred, and supplied them with subjects of conversation.

Miss Una was working a map of England, and inquired one day how long the island had been divided into shires and counties. Mrs. Stanley applied to the young ladies to know if any of them could resolve the question, but as they were all silent, "you should endeavour, my dears," said she, "to remember what you read, or it will be of very little advantage. I believe, Harriet, you read an account of this division, a few months ago, when you were going through the reigns of the Saxon Monarchs. Do not you remember that the great King Alfred, in the year 886 repaired the city of London, which had been burnt by the Danes in 839, and that he afterwards divided the kingdom into shires, hundreds, and tithings?" "I did not recollect it," said Miss Una. "But pray," added Miss Saxby, "did the same King set up all the crosses? for I remember something about their being erected, though I have forgotten when it happened." "Your memory is very short, I am afraid," replies Mrs. Stanley; "but if you were to write down such particulars, you would find it of great assistance; as it appears very illiterate to be unac-

quainted with those facts which have occurred in the history of your native country. All the crosses you mention, were erected by King Edward the First, in every place where the funeral procession of his Queen stopped, from Lincolnshire (where she died) to Westminster. There were in all ten, I think. One at Lincoln, Grantham, Stamford, Geddington, Northampton, Stoney Stratford, Dunstable, St. Alban's, Waltham, and Westminster, called Charing Cross. You should always endeavour to observe what you read; but those things which relate to the island in which you live, have a particular claim to your remembrance. For this purpose I think your present work is singularly useful, as it will so strongly impress the geography of your country upon your mind, that I hope, my dear Harriet, you will never forget it." As nothing material happened to my mistress, and very little variation occurred in her manner of living, I shall pass over the usual events of every day, which my readers can easily imagine; such as her taking me out of her pocket during the time of dressing, and restoring me to

that place of confinement when she had concluded, and proceed to relate an accident in which I was very nearly concerned.

The kitten I have before mentioned, who was a great favourite with Miss Meekly, was never allowed to enter into her bed-chamber; but one day, the weather being extremely warm, and the door left open, it walked in, and laid itself down at a little distance from the window, in a spot where the sun shone; the



shutters being half closed to exclude the heat. Eliza was employed in putting a

pair of ruffles into her jacket, and I lay in her lap securely, as I imagined, till a carriage stopping at the gate, she precipitately jumped up to look out at the visitors, and in her haste let me fall upon the floor. Her motion was so sudden and unexpected that I could not save myself, or check the velocity with which I was impelled. So that I unfortunately rolled on, till I touched the edge of a book-case, and discovered myself to Mrs. Puss, who hooked me with her claws, and twisted me round several times with



as much dexterity as if I had been spinning; or, to use a more proper simile, as

if I had represented a mouse. I afforded her great entertainment for some time, till at last I found myself a second time under one of the feet of the book-case, and so fast wedged in, that it was beyond the art of even a kitten's invention to extricate me from my situation. Mrs. Stanley coming up stairs, Miss Meekly turned out my antagonist, and with unavailing care searched for me in every drawer, on every table, and upon the bed.

Long have I remained in this dull state of obscurity and confinement, unable to make known my distress, as I want the power of articulation; at least my language can be only understood to things inanimate as myself. A pen, however, which fell down near me, engaged to present these memoirs to the world. if ever it should be employed by the hand of kindness, to rescue my name from oblivion. Should the eye of youth read this account with any pleasure, it is hoped the candour of generosity will overlook its imperfections: and should fate, in some fortunate moment of futurity, again restore me to the possession of Miss Meekly, or any of her companions, my

gratitude will engage me to thank the public for its indulgence, and to continue the account of my adventures.

If I am not so happy as to meet with approbation, I shall at least have the consolation to reflect that these pages have suggested no wrong ideas to the youthful mind, have given no encouragement to vanity, nor exhibited any improper example with commendation; which is what better authors and works of higher genius cannot always be happy enough to boast. Such as it is, I submit this account of myself to the world, and only desire them to remember, in the words of the admired Gay, that,

“ From objects most minute and mean,  
“ A virtuous mind may morals glean.”

THE END OF VOL. I.



